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**AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT:**

Please amend the Abstract as follows:

~~The invention relates to data~~ Data networks[[,]] and [to]] nodes making up parts of data networks[[,]] are arranged to derive information relating to the ~~characterisation~~ characterization of paths taken by data travelling between nodes in the networks. Path ~~characterisation~~ characterization information is fed back from a receiver of data to a provider of data, and informs nodes subsequently forwarding data of characteristics of the downstream path. Also described are routing and related controlling nodes and methods for using such path ~~characterisation~~ characterization information to make informed routing and other decisions when forwarding data in a data network.